

In pursuing the State Championship, the Liberty-Benton Eagles defeated their outstanding competitors to win the state volleyball title. The Eagles played an impressive final game that highlighted the teamwork they have demonstrated throughout their trip to the playoffs. Each member of this very special team has shown the individual effort that their sport requires for a successful team result. As a direct consequence of their hard work and dedication, both on and off the court, they achieved an impressive season record that brought pride to their community.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to the Liberty-Benton High School volleyball team. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

HONORING COLLEEN DENNY

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Colleen Denny, a partner in our effort to evacuate Afghan allies and a trusted resource for them as they look ahead to the vetting process.

Service is ingrained in Ms. Denny's DNA—she is a graduate of the United States Coast Guard Academy, where she earned her degree and was commissioned as an ensign. During her 8 years in service, she served on three different ships, including as commanding officer of a fast response cutter. Her duties spanned from search and rescues, counter-narcotics operations, to humanitarian aid missions. In 2010, when Haiti's infrastructure was leveled by a massive 7.0 earthquake, Ms. Denny was one of the first boots on the ground at the Port-au-Prince harbor, providing essential medical care, helicopter evacuations, and disaster relief to the population.

Later, as a Peace Fellow with the Children's Peace Initiative in Kenya, she worked to settle differences between warring pastoralist communities. With a focus on shared activities and common purposes, Ms. Denny helped bring together children from the two sides as well as tribal leaders in order to shift how the groups saw each other from adversary to ally.

Now, as regional director for Europe at Spirit of America, Colleen was instrumental in helping our group of Afghans escape grave and immediate threats from the Taliban. Despite the tragedy of fleeing their homeland, Ms. Denny provided them the support they need to now look towards the future with hope. From securing housing to providing basic supplies and tools to stay in touch with loved ones, Ms. Denny has given the same time, care, and consideration to each request. Ms. Denny is an example of our country at its best, with an attention to detail second to none. I cannot express how grateful I am to have her skills and expertise on our side.

Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Ms. Colleen Denny for her willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty in our effort to evacuate Afghan allies from Kabul and support them in their new life. For being there, on the tarmac, to meet vulnerable men, women, and children when they landed in Tirana and for continuing to be there for them in the days and weeks

afterward, I submit these words—may they stand as a tribute to her dedicated service when the moment called for it most.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOSIP PEPERNI

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mourn and observe the passing of a hardworking public servant, Lieutenant Josip Peperni, who departed from this earth on November 16, 2021. Josip was nearing 20 years of leadership with the police department of Norwich, Connecticut when he unfortunately passed at the all too young age of 57. Josip was an indescribable positive force in the Town of Norwich, and his loss is a particularly sensitive one to the communities of eastern Connecticut.

Born across seas in Bradina, Bosnia-Herzegovina in the Balkans to Kazimir and Reljka Peperni, Josip immigrated to the United States at an early age, gaining the opportunity to establish roots of his own. In achieving that purpose, Josip transitioned to and lived as a longtime community member of southeastern Connecticut, gravitating toward a fulfilling career as a policeman. Though he held several essential roles during his loyal tenure as an officer with the Norwich Police Department—working as a school resource officer, within the department's crisis intervention team, and as a K-9 patrol officer—Josip Peperni was most recently promoted to the role of Lieutenant in 2018, overseeing the day-to-day functions of the Department's patrol unit. Joe utilized his position as Lieutenant as a resource to connect with the Town's community members, ensuring that Norwich Police portrayed an accessible and communicable brand. His incredibly approachable nature and guiding principle of treating everyone with equal respect helped him succeed in this mission. It is for these prime reasons that his intimate presence will be so sorely missed.

Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to represent constituents like Josip, who has reflected the continued strength of the American story by making the hard choice to immigrate to our nation, not just for opportunity but to also become intertwined with our communities. Though his loss is great, we should find solace in his work to contribute to that story, ensuring that it lives on through his surviving family, many of whom are now thriving members of their own communities within the State of Connecticut—his wife, Katie, his children: Nikita, Dakota Peperni and his wife Stephanie, and Kayla, grandchild Mya, and siblings Olivera and Karolina. Josip's legacy and compassionate character will also be remembered by his colleagues at the Norwich Police Department and the countless community members whose lives have been touched by his example. To that end, I ask that my colleagues and this Chamber join me in appreciating Josip's story and successes, expressing our condolences to the Peperni family and extending the reach of Josip's memory by setting it into stone.

RECOGNIZING DAVE MILLER'S SERVICE AS A T-MOBILE EMPLOYEE

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Dave Miller on his many years as General Counsel of T-Mobile, overseeing all of the company's legal and government affairs functions and participating in its expansion and success.

Dave began with the company in 1995 as the Director of Legal Affairs, supporting its work as it spun-off from its parent company, acquired other communications corporations, and changed its name to the T-Mobile we know today. In 2002, he was appointed General Counsel and Chief Legal Officer and in 2011 was appointed Executive Vice President.

He has received many accolades for this work, including the T-Mobilizer Award, the Service Partner Award, and PSBJ Corporate Counsel of the Year.

Dave's more than twenty years with the company have left their mark on the 9th Congressional District of Washington, where T-Mobile's headquarters are located. For this, I thank him and congratulate him on his retirement.

Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to honor Dave Miller for his achievements during his tenure with T-Mobile.

IN RECOGNITION OF CHIEF ANTHONY GALAGAZA OF THE BAKERSFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

Mr. VALADAO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Chief Anthony Galagaza on his retirement from the City of Bakersfield Fire Department after 30 years of service.

Chief Galagaza found his calling for community service and firefighting at a young age after witnessing his father serve as Fire Captain for over 30 years. Galagaza began his career as a seasonal firefighter for the Bureau of Land Management while volunteering as a reserve firefighter locally. His hard work and dedication allowed him to become a professional firefighter and eventually Fire Captain himself.

Chief Galagaza is a state certified chief officer and obtained numerous advanced training certificates throughout his career. He holds degrees in Fire Technology, Fire Science, and Business Administration.

Chief Galagaza dedicated his life to volunteerism and serving his community. He made great efforts to serve the Central Valley throughout his lifetime and has remained an integral part of the community.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Fire Chief Anthony Galagaza for his lifetime of service to the City of Bakersfield, California, and congratulating him on his recent retirement.